GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:10
ANSWERED ON:26.02.2007
SUICIDE BY FARMERS
Chowdhury Shri Adhir Ranjan;Nikhil Kumar Shri

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether incidents of suicide by farmers in the country are rapidly increasing;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government`s strategy to provide help to prevent such suicides by farmers have not yielded any results;

(d) if so, the details and reasons therefor; and

(e) the efforts being made by the Union Government in consultation with the State Governments to check such suicides?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 10 DUE FOR REPLY ON 26TH FEBRUARY, 2007.

(a): No, Sir.
(b): Does not arise.

(c): Various initiatives taken by the Government have provided relief to the farmers.

(d): Does not arise.

(e) A number of Schemes and Programmes are implemented both by the center and states to deal with the incidence of suicides.

The Government of India has approved a rehabilitation package for 31 suicide prone Districts in the four States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Kerala. The package is scheduled to be implemented over a period of 3 years and includes both immediate and medium term measures. It aims at establishing a sustainable and viable farming and livelihood support system through debt relief to farmers, improved supply of institutional credit, crop centric approach to agriculture, assured irrigation facilities, watershed management, better extension and farming support services, improved marketing facilities and subsidiary income opportunities through horticulture, livestock, dairying, fisheries etc. For alleviating the hardship faced by debt stressed families of farmers, ex-gratia assistance from Prime Minister`s National Relief Fund will be provided @ Rs.50 lakh per district. The Package involves a total amount of Rs.16978.69 crore consisting of Rs.10579.43 crore as subsidy/grants and Rs.6399.26 crore as loan. The state wise break-up is as under:

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Andhra Pradesh  Rs.9650.55 crore
Karnataka  Rs.2689.64 crore
Kerala   Rs.765.24 crore
Maharashtra  Rs.3873.26 crore
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In addition, the State Governments have also taken several initiatives to redress the hardship of the farmers. These include provision of financial assistance to the affected families, provision of seeds and fertilizers at concessional rates, re-schedulement of loans taken from cooperative banks etc.

Further, a comprehensive credit policy announced by the Government of India on 18th June, 2004, is currently under implementation. The following are the highlights of this announcement:

Credit flow to agriculture sector to increase @ 30% per year for next three years so as to double the agriculture credit by 2007.
Debt restructuring in respect of farmers in distress and farmers in arrears providing for rescheduling of outstanding loans over a period of five years including moratorium of two years, thereby making all farmers eligible for fresh credit.
Special One Time Settlement scheme for settling the old and chronic loan accounts of small and marginal farmers.

Banks allowed to finance for redeeming the loans taken by farmers from private moneylenders.
Commercial Banks to finance @ 100 farmers/ branch; 50 lakh new farmers to be financed by the banks in a year.
New investments in agriculture and allied activities @ 2 to 3 projects/ branch.
Refinements in Kisan Credit Cards (KCCs) and fixation of scale of finance.